

HEDLEYHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27 January 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, East Hedleyhope

Present

Chair: Sarah Woodroffe (SW)

Cllrs: Pete Ayling (PA), Judith Patrick (JP), Tony Reeve (TR), Sarah Stuart (SS), Jean Thorburn (JT), Deb Warde (DW)

Officer: Gillian Bell (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

PCSO Paige Hart

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None to declare.

3. **Public Participation**

No members of the public present.

4. **County Councillor's Report**

No report received.

5. **PCSO briefing**

No report received.

6. **Minutes and recommendations therein agreed from previous meeting on 25 November 2025**

Proposed by TR, seconded by JP.

7. **Budget update**

Balance as of 27 January 2026:

Income: £13903.59

Expenditure: £13806.11

Earmarked project expenditure:

Seat repair and installation: £1000

Windfarm Community Fund (seating project): £1803

The bank reconciliations for November and December 2025 had been circulated.

8. **Update on new website and emails**

The new website was now live but needed some additions before it was publicised more widely. Councillors were asked to forward a photo for the contacts page and TR would take

new photographs for the home page. Gov.uk email addresses were now available for councillors and the Clerk would circulate the details to set these up.

9. **Safeguarding Policy**

The Safeguarding Policy had been updated following recommendations from Point North, the administrator for the Windfarm Community Fund grants, which included reference to legislation, online safety and having a named designated safeguarding lead. It was agreed to adopt the policy and a copy would be added to the website.

10. **NALC Civility and Respect Pledge and Councillor's Statement of Assurance**

NALC was promoting this initiative to foster civil and respectful conduct in the parish and town council sector. It was noted that the Parish Council did meet the main requirements in terms of having a Code of Conduct for councillors and mechanisms for calling out inappropriate behaviour, but there were aspects of the pledge that required additional time and financial resources. However, the issues of civility and respect were important and it was agreed that all councillors would sign the individual statement of assurance. The Clerk would supply copies to be signed at the next meeting.

11. **Matters relating to the village hall, village green and nature reserve**

Upgrading the kitchen

DW had received a quote of £3025 from DCBS, which included removing the old kitchen, installing the new units, carrying out any required electrical work and fitting the new flooring. Two additional quotes were needed before an application for funding was made.

Windfarm Community Fund projects - update

The festoon lights and two external sockets had been installed but it was felt that it would be helpful to have a timer for the lights. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the electrician to discuss the cost. The quote for paving for the new seat outside the village hall remained at £1200 + VAT, with an additional charge of £100 + VAT to fix the seat. The Clerk would contact the contractor to arrange a suitable date to carry out the work.

New Windfarm Community Fund application – furniture for the village hall and step repair

The Clerk had obtained two quotes to repair the village hall step from Makepeace Landscapes: £1200 + VAT for a medium-term repair and £2570 + VAT for a permanent one. TR suggested a brick base and slabs might be a cheaper solution and the Clerk will ask about this option. DW indicated that DCBS would also be willing to provide a quote for the work.

S106 play area project - update

The Clerk had also spoken to Makepeace Landscapes regarding the play area and had received a quote of £395 + VAT to pressure wash the play equipment. It had been suggested that the surface did not require patching but could be pressure washed and treated with a moss killer at a cost of £425 + VAT. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact DCC to check if this work could go ahead.

Village hall hire agreement

Following discussion, it was agreed that the hire charge would remain at £10/hour and that the Council would reserve the right to charge an extra £15 for cleaning if this became necessary. JP suggested updating item 2 in the terms and conditions to indicate an

assembly point in case of fire and also to put up new fire exit signs in the hall to meet current legislation. The Clerk will purchase appropriate signs and will update the hire agreement. Increasing use of the hall was also discussed and TR suggested making use of Community Association funds to offer residents a 50% discount for a booking for a private event. It was agreed to try this and to advertise it through the website, flyers, the residents' Facebook page and the community newsletter.

Nature Reserve – update

DCC's Ecology team had confirmed that they had paid for the new fencing in the meadow but it was the Property Management section that was responsible for management of the nature reserve. A surveyor had been in touch and agreed to provide an update regarding the future plans for the meadow. The recent issues with ice around the new gate were discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact Property Management to ask if the surface could be improved.

12. **Future Projects**

No further projects were raised.

13. **Members' reports**

None to report.

14. **Clerk's report**

Financial

Payments made in December 2025 and January 2026:

Amazon	£ 12.57	Batteries for Xmas lights
Festive Lights	£ 60.94	Xmas lights set
G Bell	£ 461.28	November salary & IT costs
CEF	£ 20.28	Power cable for exterior festoon lights
Amazon	£ 101.95	Bulbs for exterior festoon lights
TalkMobile	£ 6.95	Village hall WiFi
Octopus Energy	£ 128.37	Village hall electricity charges: Nov 2025
Festive Lights	£ 78.94	Xmas lights set
20i	£ 1.20	Website hosting – December 2025
20i	£ 30.00	Registration fee for gov.uk domain
Lloyds Bank	£ 4.40	Monthly service charge – Nov 2025
G Bell	£ 461.28	December salary & IT costs
NRT Electrical	£ 804.00	Fitting festoon lights and external sockets
Pennine IT Services	£ 885.60	Website design and build
CoOp	£ 2.90	Bin bags for play area bin
999 Fire & Safety	£ 184.73	Fire extinguisher and PAT testing
TalkMobile	£ 6.95	Village hall WiFi
20i	£ 12.00	Website hosting – January 2026
Octopus Energy	£ 82.71	Village hall electricity charges: Dec 2025
Lloyds Bank	£ 4.90	Monthly service charge – Dec 2025
Wave	£ 77.97	Village hall water charges: 11/10/25 – 10/01/26
Total:	£ 3429.92	

Payments received:

Durham County Council	£ 2935.00	S106 funding – play area gate
Cuppa 'n' Cake	£ 20.00	Village hall hire

Unity Trust Bank	£ 55.63	Interest
Total:	£ 3010.63	

Petty cash float: £1.88

- The village hall PAT/fire extinguisher testing had been completed. A new CO₂ fire extinguisher had been required.
- The precept request had been submitted to DCC.
- A quote of £900 + VAT from Makepeace Landscapes for two concrete bases for the seats which were to be restored. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for price for slabs.
- A request for the 20 mph signs in the village had been submitted via DCC's Do it online system but the Clerk would follow this up.
- A resident at The Valley had asked about a new street sign due to ongoing issues with deliveries. This could be requested via DCC's Do it online platform, but residents may need to discuss arranging a suitable sign.

15. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Signed

Cllr Deb Warde
Vice Chair
17 February 2026